

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the Office Action mailed March 31, 2010.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2. Further, in view of the amendments to claim 1, claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to its underlying subject matter, and claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 12 have been amended to depend on claim 1 instead of claim 2. Lastly, claims 13-16 have been canceled. Thus, claims 1 and 3-12 are currently pending in this application. Support for the claim amendments can be readily found variously throughout the specification and the original claims. No new matter has been added.

In view of these amendments, Applicant believes that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1-16 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1 and 9-23 of U.S. Patent No. 7,001,355 B2. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, in the interest of expediting the allowance of the present application, Applicant has submitted herewith a terminal disclaimer for U.S. Patent No. 7,001,355 B2 in accordance with U.S. practice. Thus, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 13-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Akisada (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,426 B1). This rejection has been rendered moot by the incorporation of non-rejected claim 2 into claim 1 and the cancellation of claims 13-16.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are believed to be clearly patentable over the outstanding rejections. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the claims in light of the above remarks is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Dated: June 30, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

By:  _____

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Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-4422 for any such fees; and Applicant(s) hereby petition for any needed extension of time.